

REMARKS

Applicant has amended the present application to place the application, as a whole, into *prima facie* condition for allowance at this time. Applicant submits that substantial care has been taken to avoid the introduction of any new subject matter into the application as a result of the foregoing amendments.

Claims 1-6, 8-9, and 14, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by WO 94/04622 A1 (hereinafter the '622 patent); and claims 1, 5, and 8, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 09021089 A (hereinafter the '089 patent).

At the outset, Applicant acknowledges that claim 18 has been allowed by the Examiner. Without conceding to the Examiner's above-identified rejections, and solely for purposes of expediting prosecution of the present application, Applicant has cancelled claims 5-10, and incorporated the same into independent claim 1. Inasmuch as claims 2-4 and 11-17 ultimately depend from independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that the above-identified dependant claims should be deemed allowable.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in *prima facie* condition for allowance at the present time. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application and passage toward issuance thereof.

If any other charges or fees must be paid or credited in connection with this communication, they may be paid out of our Deposit Account No. 50-2131.

Respectfully submitted,

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